

Washington, D.C. – The House Judiciary Committee today approved legislation introduced by U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) to protect the Everglades and surrounding communities from dangerous, imported snakes. Rooney’s bill, H.R. 511, would restrict the importation of specific breeds of snakes, which are causing extensive damage to the Everglades, into the United States.

“Large, invasive snakes are causing severe damage to Florida’s environment, and they represent a danger to our communities. These snakes have been responsible for at least 15 deaths, and they’ve nearly wiped out the populations of several small mammals in parts of the Everglades.

“Banning the importation of these dangerous snakes is critical to the survival of the Everglades and its surrounding ecosystems, which simply cannot accommodate these massive predators,” said Rooney.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protections (DEP) and South Florida Water Management District, the lead state agency in restoring the Everglades, asked for a ban on the nine most dangerous species of invasive snakes more than six years ago. The U.S. Geological Survey released a [study](#) in January 2012 concluding that major declines in populations of several small mammals, including raccoons, rabbits, and opossums, are linked to the presence of invasive snakes in Everglades National Park.

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